

Watches - Edward & Lyman

Dresses 29

Clavin, Alexander

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# Curios and Relics

## Clothing Accessories

### Watches

### Owned by Lincoln

Excerpts from newspapers and other sources

From the files of the  
Lincoln Financial Foundation Collection

32-K

## PRESIDENT LINCOLN'S WATCH.

It is perhaps a noteworthy fact that Abraham Lincoln left fewer relics behind him than almost any other of our Presidents, says the *New York Morning Advertiser*. Though his death occurred such a comparatively short time ago, the objects which, so to speak, are permeated with his personality, are exceedingly scarce. A token doubly valuable on account of the associations with which it is surrounded is in the possession of Harry C. Campbell, formerly Chairman of the Campbell Burner Company, of Pittsburg, who is temporarily stopping at the Astor House in this city.

It is a Hall open-faced gold watch with case No. 14,964, which was owned by President Lincoln and worn by him during some of the most trying periods in our Nation's history. It came into Mr. Campbell's possession in a rather curious manner.

Charles Heyser, of Company D, Second United States Cavalry, enlisted at Albany, this State, Aug. 11, 1859. He was appointed acting orderly to Adjutant General Thomas in 1861, and by him was detailed as orderly to President Lincoln. President Lincoln kept him busily employed during the War carrying messages to the different departments and to the front and seemed to be much attached to him.

On Christmas Day, 1864, the President presented Heyser with the watch that he had been wearing as a Christmas gift. He afterward took it back and had the inside case engraved in fine script, "To C. Heyser, A. Lincoln, President, 1864," and returned it. Heyser carried the watch until Feb. 27, 1839, when, desiring to raise money enough to get to his birthplace in Prussia, he sold it to C. B. Todd, of Pittsburg, who in turn, on Dec. 1, 1892, sold it to Mr. Campbell.

Mr. Campbell has received a great many offers for the timepiece since, but has refused to sell. The watch is a stem winder and setter, and was made by Ligne Droitel. It is a perfect timekeeper.

## WHO HAS LINCOLN'S WATCH?

He Will Be Interested in This Story of  
the 84-Year-Old Juror.

Among the jurors serving in the Supreme Court last week was one 84 years young. He said so himself. He looks and acts just as young as he says he feels. This man is Jonathan Dillon of 46 West 117th Street. He has been engaged in the watchmaking business for the best part of seventy-four years.

Mr. Dillon, who has a remarkable memory and an interesting fund of reminiscence, tells a new story which has to do with Abraham Lincoln.

"When the civil war broke out," said Mr. Dillon, "I was in the employ of M. W. Galt & Co. on Pennsylvania Avenue, near Seventh Street, in Washington. I was the only Union sympathizer working in the shop.

"I was working upstairs when Mr. Galt came up. He was very much excited, and gasped:

"'Dillon, war has begun; the first shot has been fired.'

"At that moment I had in my hand Abraham Lincoln's watch, which I had been repairing. It was a gold, hunting case, English lever watch. The late John Hay told me afterward that it was the first watch Mr. Lincoln ever owned.

"I was in the act of screwing on the dial when Mr. Galt announced the news. I unscrewed the dial, and with a sharp instrument wrote on the metal beneath:

"'The first gun is fired. Slavery is dead. Thank God we have a President who at least will try.'

"Then I signed my name and the date. So far as I know, no one but myself ever saw the inscription, and I do not know into whose hands Mr. Lincoln's watch fell at his death."

Mr. Dillon was born in the City of Waterford, Ireland, where his ancestors had been watchmakers for generations.

"I have newspapers," he said, "containing my father's and grandfather's advertisements back 150 years. I was never out of work for twenty-four hours at a time until I retired."

"How long ago was that?" the old watchmaker was asked.

"Well, I wouldn't like to admit that I have quit yet," was the reply. "My eyes are not as good as they were once, but they are still as good as those of any one I know. When I was younger I frequently amazed friends by standing on Jersey City Heights and reading signs in Manhattan. My friends often accused me of locating and learning them before I crossed the river, but that was not the case. I could actually read them at that distance."

The law does not oblige a citizen to serve as a juror after he is 70 years old. Mr. Dillon rather enjoys the work.

NY TIMES APR. 30. 1906

In addition to objects of particularly local historical interest, the Chicago Historical Society has an excellent collection of relics of the Colonial and Revolutionary War period. Most of the famous collection of Americana, owned by the late C. F. Gunther, of Chicago, is now in the possession of this institution.

Mt. Vernon is represented by a number of the personal belongings of members of the Washington family; for instance, Martha Washington's lace cap, which is illustrated here.

The initials, A. L., are visible on the photograph of Abraham Lincoln's gold watch, shown on this page. This watch is one article in the collection of Lincoln's personal belongings given to the Chicago Historical Society by Frank G. Logan, of Chicago. The watch was presented to Lincoln by the State Journal of Springfield, Ill., and bears an inscription to this effect.



## ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S WATCH

### SOME TRADITIONAL HISTORY

(By J. B. Ferrill,

My great-great-grand-father, Joe Ferrill, was killed and scalped by the indians near Crab Orchard, where he and several other hunters had camped by a small stream for the night; the only one who escaped being "Little John Ferrill" the son of my great-great-grand-father, "Little John" was about seven years old at the time. He escaped by slipping into a hole of water under some alder bushes, leaving only his head out of the water, until the indians had killed all the men and had scalped them. After they had their war-dance they skulked away to the forest leaving the camp in flames and ashes.

Little John wandered around in the forest until about noon the next day, when he was found by a rescue party of men from the fort who had come in search of the hunters. "Little John" my great-grand-father pleaded with the men to hunt up the "injuns" and kill them for murdering his "Daddie".

After returning to the fort and imparting the sad news of the massacre, the men and some of the women, among whom was John's mother, repaired to the place where they found the mangled and scalped bodies of the murdered men, to whom they gave decent burials, and returning again to the fort, where was decided by the men, though they were bold adventurers, to return again to Maryland and Virginia from whence they came.

John grew to be a man, married, and after a few more years died leaving a widow and one child, William, who was my grand-father. She was soon married again to a man named Howell by whom she had one son, James Howell, who was the grand-father of exsheriff, J. M. Howell, who is known by every voter in LaRue county.

This widow and her two little boys, with two or three others families immigrated from Virginia to Kentucky, or rather, to what is now LaRue County, long before Kentucky became a state, my grand-father, William Ferrill at that time being about six years old. After becoming a man he married a Miss Mary Killen. They raised a family of ten children, seven boys and three girls, nearly all living to a ripe oldage. My father, Joel H. Ferrill was the oldest of the children and was born December 8, 1813.

When my father was 13 years old he, with a younger brother, were sent during a severe cold winter spell to feed some hogs, that slept in a large hollow tree about a half mile south of the top of Salsman's Hill. When they reached the place, they saw that one of the hogs had been killed, and the blood in the snow, and the print of the hog where it had been drug in the snow down the side of the hill showed the direction in which the hog had been taken. They hastened home and reported facts to their father, who went with them the next morning to verify their statement. They followed the tracks to the foot of the hill and to an old mans house by the name of either Harriss or Harrison. They soon told him their business, relating to him that if it was my grand-father's hog that he could identify it by a crooked foot which was caused when the hog was a pig by being crippled. After looking at the feet of the hog it was easily identified; my grand father was highly insensed at having his hog stolen and threatened this old man with prosecution. The old man pleaded innocence, saying his son had bought the hog, giving a flint-lock rifle for it, but offered to give to my grand father a fine silver watch if he would say no more or do no more, to which my grand father agreed.

This old man said the way he came to own the watch was that Thomas Lincoln came to him to buy a broad ax but had no money, and having taken a contract to hew a set of house logs and as soon as he completed the work he would pay for the broad ax, but left the watch as security for the money with the understanding that he was to redeem the watch when he got the money. He also stated that the watch belonged to Abe, his little boy, who had received it as a present from an aunt with the understanding that Abe was to wear it when he became a man. He never redeemed the watch. My grand father took the watch and gave it to my father, and he gave it to my eldest brother, Benjamine. I now have the watch in my possession and it runs and it runs and keeps time. It was made in Stockholm, the capital of Sweden. It has been in our family nearly a century. I forgot to say that this old man from whom my grand-

father got the watch, made the broad ax, being a very fine gunsmith and blacksmith.

I also have in my possession a very fine British sword which was captured on the battlefield at New Orleans from a British officer by Demas Stile's grand father who was a valient and brave soldier in the war of 1812, my father, being Captain of the state malitia, purchasing the sord at Stiles' sale.

My father was born while his father was gone to the war of 1811, having been drafted for army service, but before reaching New Orleans he hired an institute by giving a buckskin jacket with six silver dollars sewed in the lining of it.

*La Rue County, Kentucky.*

*Mar 26, 1925*

Watch formerly belonging to Abraham Lincoln.

The following story I found in a foreign paper, and repeat it as I found it, so can't vouch for the correctness of same:

A very curious watch, which once belonged to Abraham Lincoln, once president of the United States of America, is now possessed by the family Hansen-Lund in Jelling, Denmark, and its history is as follows:

The watch dates from 1659 and was made by an American, Stanley, whose heirs presented it to Abraham Lincoln. He always carried the watch during the war 1861--65, and his generals set their watches by it. After the war Lincoln sold the watch to a French nobleman, serving in the northern army. The price paid is said to have been 40,000 francs, which Lincoln donated to people made destitute by the war. The Frenchman's heirs later sold the watch to a German banker in Berlin. Then it changed hands several times, until it became the property of a Swedish ~~xxx~~ civil engineer, from whom it passed to the present owner.

In spite of the fact the the watch is nearly 300 years old, it is still running and keeping correct time. It is a so-called antique silver watch, a "perpetual motion" watch; besides showing the hour it also shows the date. Only at long intervals is it necessary to wind it. The watch is twice as large as a watch of the present day, and it is the only specimen of its kind in the world.

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#### LINCOLN'S WATCH IN NORWAY?

What purports to be Abraham Lincoln's watch has been brought to Oslo by a Norwegian who bought it at auction in Sweden. The watch was made in Paris in 1659 and was acquired by an American named Stanley, who in his will gave it to the Lincoln family. Lincoln is said to have carried the watch in 1861-62 and to have given it to a French nobleman who had served him during the war. When the Frenchman died his family sold the watch to a Berlin banker, who in turn sold it to the Swede, who recently parted with it. Though nearly 300 years old, the watch keeps good time. It is of silver and shows both hours and dates. The new owner has received many offers for the watch from America.

BJORN BURKHOLDT.

Oslo, Norway, Dec. 29.

ca. 1926

## Timepiece Once Carried by Lincoln Causes Quarreling, Tears and Bitter Words Between Members of a Family

### Battle Over Ownership Settled by Justice Charles Lockie.

A WATCH that Lincoln wore—its ticking long silenced with age, yet the mute timepiece Wednesday afternoon caused quarreling, tears and bitter words between members of the family that owns it.

The family was fighting in the court of Justice of Peace Charles Lockie for the relic of the martyr president. An 87-year-old mother was arrayed against her son. Still another son was claiming the watch by right of inheritance and an uncle, brother-in-law of the elderly woman, had presented his claims by letter and affidavit from Springfield, Ill.

One wondered if Lincoln could have taken the place of Justice Lockie, if he could have seen the mother weeping for the watch which was made doubly dear to her because it had been removed from the pocket of her dead husband 17 years ago; if he could have seen the fire flash from the defiant eyes of the woman's children and heard the acrid remarks that were made, how he would have decided the case.

One wondered too if Lincoln could have foreseen a family broken up and quarreling for the little watch that once was ticking off the minutes of that greatest family row of nations, when relatives in blue and gray were slaying each other, if he would have thought the thing worth saving or if the watch would not have been thrown rather suddenly into his wastebasket.

#### Watch's History Not Disputed.

Courts deal in law and justice and sometimes in mercy but sentiment they must know not. Even the lawyers, discussing the matter, agreed that the only value the watch could have at law would be the weight of its old gold.

Justice Lockie heard the case. There was little dispute as to its history. The watch had been made by W. H. Speulda, a Springfield watchmaker, and presented to Abraham Lincoln when the president was elected to congress. It had been worn by Lincoln and carried often up to the time of his death. Mrs. Lincoln returned the watch to the man who made it after her husband's martyrdom.

When the watchmaker died his widow came into possession of the watch. Then in some way it became the possession of one of their sons, Henry Speulda. Henry's widow,

Mrs. Sarah Speulda, the woman who was claiming the watch before Justice Lockie, alleges that her husband's mother gave it to him.

A brother, Martin Speulda, who like his father is a Springfield, Ill., watchmaker, wrote Justice Lockie that his sister had obtained the watch after their mother had died and gave it to Henry although it had been promised to Martin by his mother. It is on the strength of this promise that Martin now is claiming the watch.

Henry Speulda died suddenly and Mrs. Sarah Speulda came into possession of the watch. She made her home a great deal of the time with her son, Henry Speulda, jr., 1915 Everett street, and he claims that she left the watch in his possession most of the time. Mrs. Speulda, however, claims that she took it with her whenever she left to visit her other children.

#### Gave Son the Watch.

Last March Mrs. Speulda left her son Henry's home after some domestic trouble and went to live with a daughter in South Dakota. The watch and a jeweled pin were locked up in a drawer in Henry's house. Mrs. Speulda asked him to give her the jewelry and then after taking the pin, handed him the watch, telling him to keep it.

Henry claims that he understood his mother to be giving him the watch and took it. Mrs. Speulda claims that she only intended him to keep it until she called for it.

Justice Lockie ruled that she actually made him the gift of the watch and cannot now change her mind and reclaim it. Henry's attorney, Tom Murray, claimed that the influence of her other children had caused Mrs. Speulda to bring the suit to reclaim the watch. Justice Lockie ruled out the claims of the Springfield watchmaker on the grounds that although he may have been promised the watch, it never had been presented to him and so the gift had not been completed in the eyes of the law.

Another brother of Henry, Louis Speulda, 2738 Virginia street, claims to have a letter which states the watch is to be inherited by the youngest son in each family.

"Who is the youngest son?" asked Justice Lockie.

"I am," Louis replied.

"I thought so when you began to talk," declared the court. Louis did not produce the letter so the court did not consider his claim.

The case will be appealed to the district court by Alfred Strong, attorney for Mrs. Speulda.

## Quarrel Over Old Watch of Lincoln; Case Is Appealed

Sioux City, Ia., Dec. 13.—[Special.]

—A watch presented to Abraham Lincoln by a Springfield, Ill., watchmaker when he was elected to congress and which he is said to have had in his pocket when he was assassinated was the subject of a family controversy in Justice court here this morning.

After the emancipator's death the watch is said to have been returned to the maker by Mrs. Lincoln. At the death of the maker the timepiece came into the possession of a son, who died in Sioux City and whose widow made her home in Sioux City with a son until some months ago, when she went to a daughter in South Dakota, at which time she left the watch with the son.

He claims she presented it to him, though she says she just left it with him for safekeeping. It appears other children wanted the watch and induced their mother to make demand for it. The replevin suit resulted.

The watch is said to have been made by W. H. Speulda of Springfield. Justice Lockie today awarded possession of the battered old timepiece to the grandson of the maker, Henry Speulda, a Sioux City brakeman. Notice of appeal has been filed.

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CHICAGO ILL TRIBUNE  
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 14, 1928.

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## ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S WATCH FOR SALE

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### MR. FORD OFFERS £680

COPENHAGEN, Tuesday.

A watch which belonged to Abraham Lincoln is being offered for sale here. A bid of £680 has been received from Mr. Henry Ford but has not yet been accepted.

The watch is 147 years old. Lincoln wore it during the American Civil War.—Reuter.

ONLY TELEGRAPH 29-12-34

**FORD SEEKS LINCOLN WATCH.**

COPENHAGEN, Jan. 15.—(A. P.)—A 147-year-old watch which Abraham Lincoln carried in the Civil war drew a bid of \$3,400 from Henry Ford when it was offered for sale here recently.



# LINCOLN LORE

Bulletin of the Lincoln National Life Foundation - - - - - Dr. Louis A. Warren, Editor,  
Published each week by The Lincoln National Life Insurance Company, Fort Wayne, Indiana

Number 488

FORT WAYNE, INDIANA

August 15, 1938

## LINCOLN AND THE UNITED STATES SANITARY COMMISSION

In the summer of 1780, the women of Philadelphia were aroused to the needs of the poor American soldiers which could not be met by the Commissary Department of the Army. They organized the Soldiers Relief which contributed much to the comfort of those who fought for our independence.

The Red Cross of the Civil War period was known as the Sanitary Commission. It was officered by those who received no salary for their services and who often paid their own traveling expenses as they moved about from place to place in their work. It was largely directed by the women of the country.

It was claimed that the Commission worked with Five Hands which are designated as follows:

1. "It distributes supplies."
2. "It inspects camps and field hospitals by medical men."
3. "It inspects general hospitals by the same agents."
4. "It organizes special relief with all its agencies, in all its departments."
5. "It keeps an accurate Hospital Directory so that the situation and condition of 500,000 soldiers may be known to their friends throughout the country."

The Sanitary Commission not only worked with five hands but it also earned most of the funds with which to carry on the work. Its chief source of income was Sanitary Fairs which it conducted through the entire North. While fairs as a means of raising money for charity and worthy enterprises was not an innovation, they were highly specialized during the period they were operated by the Commission.

Lincoln was intensely interested in this branch of civilian service and presented many autograph writings to be sold at these fairs. The full extent to which he contributed to the many exhibitions throughout the country will never be known. Just recently the editor of *Lincoln Lore* discovered two instances of Lincoln's generosity which add to *Lincolnia* two more autograph photographs and an autograph letter not found in the published works.

The Brooklyn Sanitary Fair held in February and March, 1864, published a daily paper called "The Drum-Beat." In the issue for March 5, this notice is carried:

"It appears that the President of the United States has kindly shown an active interest in our Fair. Rev. Mr. Woodruff, of the Hanson Place M. E. Church in this city, during an interview with President Lincoln on Wednesday, obtained an autograph letter to the New England Kitchen, which was handsomely announced yesterday at the dinner-table of the Kitchen, by Mr. Murray, and instantly sold for one hundred dollars to C. H. Mallory, Esq., of Mystic Bridge, Connecticut." This letter presented by Lincoln is printed here for the first time since its early publication in *The Drum-Beat*:

"Executive Mansion, March 2, 1864.

"To the New-England Kitchen, connected with the Brooklyn Sanitary Fair:

"It is represented to me that my autograph, appended to this note, may somewhat augment, through the means you are so patriotically employing, the contributions for the benefit of our gallant and suffering soldiers, and for such an object I am glad to give it.

"Yours, truly, A. Lincoln."

The Lincoln National Life Foundation has recently come into possession of two autograph photographs of Abraham Lincoln which he presented along with four others to be sold at the Tazewell County Fair in Illinois. This was in October, 1864.

Some of the more important contributions which Lincoln made were the original manuscripts of his most valuable state papers and copies of his Gettysburg Address. The first Sanitary Fair at Chicago was conducted in October and November, 1863, and the committee wrote to the President asking him to send the original draft of the Emancipation Proclamation to be sold. It was purchased by Thomas B. Bryan for \$3,000. This copy was burned in the Chicago fire of 1871.

Lincoln received in return for his donation a watch, presented to the donor whose contributions brought in the most money and he replied with this word of thanks.

"Executive Mansion,  
"Washington, December 17, 1863.

"My Dear Sir

"I have received from the Sanitary Commission of Chicago, the watch which you placed at their disposal, and I take the liberty of conveying to you my high appreciation of your humanity and generosity, of which I have unexpectedly become the beneficiary.

"I am very truly yours,  
"James H. Hoes, Esq. A. Lincoln."

The ladies in charge of the Army Relief Bazaar at Albany, New York, made an overture to Lincoln for his preliminary copy of the Proclamation Emancipation and it too was forwarded and sold to Jerret Smith for \$1,100, which sum found its way into the treasury of the United States Sanitary Commission. This copy is preserved by the state of New York.

Several original copies of the Gettysburg Address in Lincoln's own hand were prepared by the President and at least two went to Sanitary Fairs. One went to Mrs. Hamilton Fish, along with Everett's address for the New York Sanitary Fair of March, 1864. Another was placed in an autograph book and it was sold at the Baltimore fair in 1864.

Lincoln had an opportunity to visit the Sanitary Fair in Washington in 1864 and it was one of the few instances where he attended a public gathering during the time he was president. On this occasion he delivered a brief speech which gave his reaction to the fairs as well as his appreciation of the women in America who sponsored the work of the Sanitary Commission.

"In this extraordinary war extraordinary developments have manifested themselves such as have not been seen in former wars; and among these manifestations nothing has been more remarkable than these fairs for the relief of suffering soldiers and their families, and the chief agents in these fairs are the women of America. I am not accustomed to the use of the language of eulogy; I have never studied the art of paying compliments to women; but I must say that if all that has been said by orators and poets since the creation of the world in praise of women were applied to the women of America, it would not do them justice for their conduct during the war. I will close by saying, God bless the women of America."

Sacramento Cal

April 14. 1942.

Mr F Ray Risdon  
Los Angeles Cal

My Dear Mr Risdon: It  
was refered to you by  
the Abraham Lincoln Assoc  
in regards to an old Album  
of 18 pictures and 2 Duerotype  
Covers an a watch No 8585  
inscribed Abraham Lincoln  
these pictures have a 2¢  
Revenue stamp on Some  
and others 2¢ Bankcheck.

I would be pleased  
to hear from you in Regards  
to Same Respt Yours  
E. J. Warter  
1418 - 7th St



April 16, 1942

Mr. E. J. Darter  
1418 - 7th Street  
Sacramento, California

My dear Mr. Darter:

Acknowledging with thanks your special-delivery letter of April 14, will state that, although I am not interested in the album of cartes de visite and the two daguerreotype cases which you mentioned, unless the photographs are originals of Abraham Lincoln or Civil War Generals or Cabinet officers, I should be glad to have you send me a full description concerning the watch (No. 8585) bearing the inscription "Abraham Lincoln." What is its history and how did it come into your possession? And what is your price for it?

Awaiting your reply, and thanking you,  
I am

Very truly yours,

FRR:lg

Sacramento Cal  
May. 16 1942.

Dear Mr. Rusden.

I have completed the job  
of Collecting things that ought  
of belonged to Mr Lincoln and  
in regards to the watch this could  
of belonged to Lincoln's Grandfather  
made from 1804 to 1812. The Necklace  
is Solid Silver each link made  
seperatly The cream Pitcher  
is No 86 hand made out of Silver  
the Card Plate is Silver Glass  
bottom with Cotton under and.  
Decorations a Butterfly with tufts  
of Grass arranged like flowers  
The Kluogertype cases, Lincoln's  
Step mother, General Sherman  
the 2 large oil paintings do not  
know one I believe to be Mrs L.  
I am open for an offer on these  
articles Respt E L Darter  
1418-7th

2.  
F. RAY RISDON  
ATTORNEY AND COUNSELOR AT LAW  
817-819 TRANSAMERICA BUILDING  
SEVENTH AND OLIVE STREETS  
LOS ANGELES, CALIF.  
PHONE: MADISON 2202

COPY

May 23, 1942

Mr. E. J. Darter  
1418 7th Street  
Sacramento, California

My dear Mr. Darter:

Following receipt of your letter of May 16, I showed your correspondence and clipping to a friend of mine who is a dealer in Lincolniana. He felt, as I do, that, in the absence of any documentary or other evidence as to the history of the watch and other relics purporting to have been the property of Abraham Lincoln, it will be difficult for you to find someone who will purchase these relics for what they otherwise might bring were it definitely shown that they belonged to President Lincoln during his lifetime. For this reason, neither he nor I would be interested in making an offer on any of the relics mentioned.

With regard to the photographs--the cartes-de-visite and the daguerreotypes--I might be interested if I were able to see the album and the cases containing these photographs. Perhaps you would be willing to forward these items to some dealer here, or to some bank in Los Angeles, with instructions to allow me to inspect them and to make an offer for them, or for such of the items that might be of interest to me.

I am this day forwarding the clipping and correspondence to Dr. Louis A. Warren, Director of the Lincoln National Life Foundation, Fort Wayne, Indiana, with the privilege given him to communicate with you, should he be interested in the items which you own and have for sale.



Darter--2

May 23, 1942

Thanking you for writing me about this matter,  
I am

Very truly yours,

FRR:ig

1  
7/

Sacramento Cal.

May 16 1942

Lincolneana Publishers

Gentlemen :- Enclosed you will  
find clipping out of our local Paper  
but not showing all the articles

The little Cream pitcher is No 86

The Necklace each link made separate  
The card platter is probably 10 inches  
x 6 in Decorations are White cotton  
under Glass with a Dried Butterfly  
with tufts of Blue Grass arranged  
like flowers there are 24 Pictures  
in album with 2 duergotype Cases  
1 General Sherman 1 Lincoln's  
Stepmother I am open for an offer  
on the above articles

Respt

E. J. Parter

1418-7th

Waleh

May 19, 1942

Mr. E. J. Darter  
1418 Seventh  
Sacramento, Calif.

Dear Mr. Darter:

We are very happy to have your letter of May 15 together with the clippings which you forwarded but we do not feel that we have an opportunity to dispose of these items at the present time and therefore we would be unable to consider them for purchase

In the future when you have items of Lincolniana which you think we might be interested in acquiring it is a fixed rule with this organization that the owner must place a price upon them before we can take a definite step toward their purchase.

Yours very truly,

MAC:EB  
M.A. Cook



Watch

June 1, 1942

Mr. E.J. Darter  
1418 Seventh St.  
Sacramento Calif.

Dear Mr. Darter:

Your letter to Mr. Risdon at Los Angeles has been forwarded to our Foundation here at Fort Wayne, but I cannot feel we would wish to acquire any of the interesting antiques you have gathered.

The Watch looks rather interesting indeed but inasmuch as there were a great many Abraham Lincolns living from 1804 thereafter it would be with some difficulty that we could identify the inscription as Abraham Lincoln, the President. Most of the other Lincolns were more able to own watches during the early years of the century than was he who later became President.

Very truly yours,

LAW:EB

Director



# Among These Heirlooms May Be Prized Lincoln Relics



**JAPANESE OWNERS** of the Ashi jewelry store, 1219 Fourth street, agreed to sell what may prove to be the one-time prized watch and chain of President Abraham Lincoln, following the government's Japanese evacuation order, according to E. J. Darter, 1418 Seventh street. Darter, who for more than 35 years has been a collector of coins and historical objects, is a paperhanger by trade, and is pictured examining the watch he bought. At the left in the picture above are the watch and chain, a silver, hand-wrought necklace and a silver pitcher, all of which he purchased at the local store. Darter says the articles had been there for years, unclaimed by unidentified owners who apparently had long since died. The photographs in the top picture, including one of Lincoln and members of his family, were found in an old album which Darter discovered amid castaway articles in an old house where he was working on P street. The watch photograph clearly shows President Lincoln's name as it appears in the watch case.





# Lincoln Watch and Old Album Found Here May Trace Lost Data on Emancipator's Life

By NEIL SHAW

**D**ID relatives, or at least, intimate friends of President Lincoln live in Sacramento before, or after, the Civil war? Are there descendants of any Sacramento county families who recognize the names of Mary L. Wolfenden or M. W. Clark, who may have lived in or around the local district 80 or 90 years ago? Is there an expert in the capital who knows something of the famous beards of the past—and thus might be able to recognize the picture of a man whose beard was at least seven feet long?

## Finds Lincoln Watch

These, and a thousand other questions, arose yesterday in the home of E. J. Darter, 1418 Seventh street, whose hobby for more than 35 years has been collecting coins and historical objects.

Darter recently came into possession of a watch, made of rare coin silver, which has the name of Abraham Lincoln inscribed in the back of the case. It is a Bristol watch, works No. 8585—indicating it was manufactured many years prior to the Civil war—and the kind requiring two keys to wind it.

He also has an old family album, which at one time belonged to a Sacramentan, doubtless an early settler, containing separate pictures of President Lincoln and members of Lincoln's family. Also in the album are pictures bearing names of Mary L. Wolfenden and M. W. Clark.

## Darter Seeks Proof

These are only two among hundreds of antiques, some of which may turn out to be valuable possessions, according to officials of the state library and others, were obtained by Darter in Sacramento.

## Many Have Visited State

Darter and other local residents are amazed at the discovery of the old family album, which, they are all sure, will lead eventually to the discovery of a hitherto unidentified gem of Sacramento history.

Although considered remote by Darter and the others, there

even is a possibility that Lincoln himself may have been in California before the days he rose to national prominence.

They point out that Generals Sherman and Grant are only two of nearly a score of one-time California residents, even though temporary, who later won undying fame throughout the world.

What Darter primarily is interested in now is something, some book, or some person, who can unravel the mystery surrounding the watch, the pictures, and some of his other possessions.

(text missing)

Strangely enough, Darter points out, the objects in his possession are concrete evidence contradicting most authorities on Abraham Lincoln, who all seem to contend Lincoln family pictures always were taken in groups. The authorities also seem to believe Darter's pictures are copies, but obviously some of the rarest of them are not.

## Pictures From Illinois

Several of the pictures have revenue stamps on the back of them, some were taken in Beardstown, Ill., some in Chilli-cothe, Ill., and others in Jackson-ville, Ill.—all in the home territory of the immortal rail-splitter.

Darter declared he has reason to believe the silver watch and chain was the one given by President Lincoln to the California delegation which presented Lincoln with a watch and chain made of California gold, during Lincoln's inauguration ceremonies in Washington, D. C.

Darter also says the watch could have been presented to Lincoln, either by the president's father or grandfather.



# LINCOLN LORE

Bulletin of the Lincoln National Life Foundation - - - - - Dr. Louis A. Warren, Editor  
Published each week by The Lincoln National Life Insurance Company, Fort Wayne, Indiana

Number 730

FORT WAYNE, INDIANA

April 5, 1943

## CLOCKS AND WATCHES OF THE LINCOLNS

The recurrence of the anniversary of Lincoln's assassination has recalled one of the first questions which was put to the Lincoln Foundation, upon its establishment fifteen years ago. It referred to the legend about the hands of dummy clocks, used by jewelers being set at the hour Lincoln was shot or the hour he died. As such clocks are invariably set at 8:18, it will be observed immediately, that inasmuch as Lincoln was shot about 10:30 P. M. and died at 7:22 A. M. the following morning, neither time harmonizes with the traditional 8:18. From the earliest statements of the tradition available, it seems to have originated with a New York tradesman who made dummy clocks for advertising purposes. A story in the *Des Moines Register* for February 12, 1909, attempted to trace the origin of the yarn to a signmaker in Germany.

Not all the watches Lincoln had presented to him have been accounted for, and while some have been identified as having once been in the possession of the President, others are no closer associated with him than the German signmaker's dummy clock. At the inauguration Lincoln is said to have received a watch made of California gold, presented by the California delegation. The receipt of another watch is acknowledged in a letter Lincoln wrote on Dec. 17, 1863. Some of the more familiar watch and clock stories are presented in this issue of *Lincoln Lore*.

### *The Speulda Time Piece*

According to the *Sioux City Journal* of December 13, 1928, W. H. Speulda, a Springfield, Illinois watchmaker, presented Abraham Lincoln with one of his time pieces when his fellow townsman was elected to Congress in 1846. Mr. Lincoln is said to have been carrying this same watch when he was assassinated. After Lincoln's death the Speulda family claimed that the President's widow gave the watch back to Mr. Speulda. Ownership of the watch caused litigation in the Speulda family.

### *Lady's Blue Watch*

A watch Lincoln is said to have purchased for Mary Todd, and then failed to make the presentation, was given much attention in the *New York Times* of February 10, 1936. The inscription in the watch reads, "To Miss Mary Todd from A. L. 1841." According to the news item the watch was presented to Miss Mary N. Curtis of Louisville, Kentucky, on a memorable January afternoon, 1841, after Mr. Lincoln had broken his engagement with Mary. The watch was later presented to Miss Elizabeth DeWitt and still later came into the possession of a Washington antique dealer, then passed to a New York furrier. The story about the same watch appears in the *New York Tribune* for January 4, 1932 in which it is claimed Lincoln paid \$300 for the watch.

### *A Silver Waltham*

Dennis F. Hanks, a kinsman of the President, visited Mr. Lincoln in Washington in 1864. On his way from his home in Charleston, Illinois to Washington, while changing trains at Altoona, Mr. Hanks had his watch stolen. Upon relating the incident to Mr. Lincoln, the President reached in a desk drawer and presented Dennis with a silver Waltham which was carried during the circuit riding days in Illinois. At ninety-two years of age Dennis Hanks made affidavit that Lincoln had given him the watch and identified it as follows:

"The watch he gave me is a silver 'Waltham' case No. E 279 W. M. Ellery movement—key winder—No. C 7613—Boston, Mass. The initials (D. F. H.) were engraved by Joseph Dikob of Charleston, Illinois, after I returned here."

Upon the death of Dennis Hanks the watch was sold to C. F. Gunther of Chicago, for \$500. It is now in possession

of a Chicago lawyer who Lincoln students like to think of as the dean of collectors of Lincoln curios.

### *The Presidential Gold Watch*

When Dennis Hanks received the gift of the silver watch from Mr. Lincoln, in Washington, in 1864, the President is said to have taken a gold watch from his pocket and made this statement, "Some of my friends here in Washington did not think my old silver watch was good enough for a President to carry, and they gave me this one." Possibly the story has been confused somewhat and the gold watch Lincoln carried as President may have been the same one presented to him by the *State Journal* of Springfield, Illinois and so inscribed. The watch further bears the inscription "A. L." and it also came into possession of C. F. Gunther. Later the watch was acquired by Frank C. Logan of Chicago and presented to the Chicago Historical Society.

### *The Hall Open-faced Watch*

The *New York Morning Observer* is responsible for the story of Lincoln's presentation of a gold watch to Charles Heyser on Christmas Day, 1864. Heyser is said to have been serving at this time as an orderly to the President and after the gift was made the President had this inscription placed in the watch:

"To C. Heyser, A. Lincoln, President. 1864." Heyser, desiring to raise money in 1889 to return to the place of his birth, in Prussia, sold the watch to C. B. Todd, of Pittsburgh, who later on sold the watch to Harry C. Campbell of the same city. The watch is a Hall, open-faced, gold watch with case No. 14,964.

### *Perpetual Motion Watch*

One tradition copied from a foreign newspaper stated that a watch made in 1659 was presented to Lincoln by the heirs of the maker. The news item further continued that "Lincoln always carried the watch during the war 1861-1865, and his generals set their watches by it. After the war Lincoln sold the watch to a French nobleman serving in the northern army." Lincoln is said to have donated the 40,000 francs received for the watch to people made destitute by the war. The watch was called a "perpetual motion" watch as it needed to be wound only at long intervals.

### *The Unclaimed Watch*

When the Japanese owners of the Ashe Jewelry Store in Los Angeles were disposing of their holdings recently, subsequent to the evacuation order, a watch inscribed, "Abraham Lincoln," which had been in their possession for many years, was sold. A newspaper account of the sale of the watch suggested that it was probably left there for repairs and never called for. The watch number is 8585 and on the inside of the back, inner case, is inscribed the name Abraham Lincoln.

### *The Black Marble Clock*

When Mrs. Lincoln sold some of her possessions in Chicago at auction in 1872, Mr. J. H. Windsor is said to have purchased at the sale a black marble clock. The *Des Moines Register Leader* of February 8, 1909 gave the following description of the clock:

"The clock is of black marble, with a yellow marble trimming, but the origin of these marbles is not definitely known. It is about eighteen inches in length and perhaps twelve or fourteen inches in height. It has brass or bronze ornaments on top, at one end there being a conical horn of plenty which does not have the twist of the ordinary cornucopia, and at the other end is a sitting figure with a scroll and at one side a small Greek lamp."





October 25-50

Lincoln National Life Foundation,  
Ft. Wayne, Indiana.

Attention Mr. Louis A. Warren, Editor,  
Dear Mr. Warren:-

I called on Mr. Lester Olson, and he incidentally showed me Bulletin #730 of "Lincoln Love" published by yourself as Editor. This Bulletin had to do with Lincoln's Clocks and watches.

In it was a description of a watch (gold) with an inscription "To C. Hayes, A Lincoln President, 1864" The number of the watch case was given as #14,964.

I once lived in Springfield Illinois where I practiced law from 1910 to 1931, at which time I moved to Arizona for my health. While I was a resident of Illinois (Springfield, over

I obtained a gold open faced watch with the above inscription on the back thereof.

I never paid any attention to the number of the watch case, until Mr. Olson happened to show me Bulletin # 730 of "Lincoln Lore" and upon further examination of the watch I find it has the same number - 14,964, as mentioned in your said Bulletin # 730.

I have had this watch in my possession for nearly 35 years now, but didn't pay much attention to it until Mr. Olson showed me this Bulletin on it.

Please advise me, if by any chance, this watch might be the one mentioned and described in your "Bulletin # 730 Lincoln Lore" and whether or not you might be interested in acquiring it. Also would you please send me a copy of the Bulletin # 730.



Thanking you for your courtesies  
in this regard, I am  
Sincerely,

C. C. Bierman

C. C. Bierman  
832 East Glen Ave.

Milwaukee, 11, Wisconsin.

P. S. Is there a market for this  
watch and if so what is its  
value? Bierman

WR 72 H  
November 3, 1950

Mr. C. C. Bierman  
832 East Glen Ave.  
Milwaukee 11, Wis.

My dear Mr. Bierman:

You will please find attached to this letter a copy of Lincoln Lore mentioning the watch and also the newspaper from which we secured our information. Of course your first task would be to find out whether or not Mr. Heyser was associated with Mr. Lincoln. This can be established when it appears as if your watch might have some value. We are not allowed to appraise items of this type.

Very truly yours,

Director

LAW:JK

THE SUNDAY STAR

Washington, D. C.  
January 4, 1970

### Lincoln Watch Prized

OREBIC, Yugoslavia — The Sunj family of Orebic prizes a gold watch, a gift from President Abraham Lincoln to Josip Sunj, who died in 1913. The Yugoslav seaman received the gift in gratitude for saving the crew of an American ship in the Atlantic in 1861.

ack  
5/26/70

24 Austin Avenue  
San Anselmo, California  
May 22nd, 1970

Lincoln National Life Foundation  
Fort Wayne, Indiana

Dear Sirs:

I am currently in possession of a watch presented to my great grandfather by President Lincoln and am desirous of learning more about the details of background that might be of help in documenting its authenticity and historical worth. Such information is needed to aid the Committee for the Preservation of the White House better determine any interest they might have for this piece. Mr. John Baker of the New York Public Library has directed me to you as a possible source of such help.

I enclose two photostatic documents to provide you with necessary detail. The first, Description of the Watch and Engravings, sets forth the written and numerical information available from the watch itself. The second, Statement of Personal Information Regarding Watch, further lists what personal knowledge I have of the piece, as gleaned from a variety of sources. Also, I have available a set of color photographs should the need for them arise.

Is there any information that you might be able to locate pertaining to this watch and its presentation? Can you suggest any further sources of help? Do you know of anyone that might be interested in such a piece? Could you direct this letter to them?

I would be happy to produce what further information I can upon request and remain appreciative of any effort you expend to help me with this matter.

Thank you,

*Richard Rodgers*

Richard Rodgers

dr



## DESCRIPTION OF WATCH AND ENGRAVINGS

*It is approximately 3 inches in diameter, gold in color, and contains the following inscriptions. Photographs are available for purposes of documentation.*

*The outer front cover presents a depiction of one man pulling another onto a floating raft or debris. The back sets forth the engraving of the Seal of the United States.*

*On the inside front cover are inscribed the words: "From the President of the United States to Captain William Rogers for the Rescue of the Crew of the American Ship Escort, 1863".*

*The clock face displays the manufacturer's name: The American Watch Company.*

*The inside back cover possesses the following symbols in cruciform pattern. An Anchor, Bull's head, a Lion, the number 18 (referring to the purity of gold content I believe), and the number 3444.*

*Inside the second cover on the back are these vertically arranged symbols: A Crown, the number 18, and the number 3444.*

*Finally, on the works within the second cover are to be found the words: American watch Co. Waltham, Mass. The serial number listed is 50046.*

## STATEMENT OF PERSONAL INFORMATION REGARDING WATCH

Essentially, it is the information of the inscription. My great grandfather, an English merchant or naval Captain, was in some way able to effect the rescue of the crew of the American Ship Escort. This undertaking was considered meritorious enough to result in the receipt of this Presidential Presentation Piece from Mr. Lincoln.

Whether he had it sent to Captain Rodgers or made the presentation in person I cannot state. Any possible implication this act might have had upon the Civil War I cannot elaborate upon as well.

There is a discrepancy in the spelling of the last name, Rodgers, one that has been perennial with the family. Most are inclined to spell it without the 'd'. No doubt, this resulted from a clerical error.

American ships by the name Escort have been located in the archives of the Naval Academy at Annapolis. The family name is well represented there too. However, any precise information with relation to the watch will await further communications. Correlation may then follow.

Waltham Precision Instruments Company has provided me with a list of serial numbers of watches their parent company, the American Watch Company, manufactured during the period in question. An examination of that list for the number 50046 gives a corresponding year, 1862, that confirms the subsequent award.

This statement is only an up-to-date summary of information available to me. Further research may warrant revision or addition to its contents.

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**March 11, 2009**

## Timeless Lincoln Memento Is Revealed

**By ROBIN POGREBIN**

WASHINGTON — Confirming a rumor that has circulated for generations, the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History opened a gold pocket watch that belonged to Abraham Lincoln on Tuesday and discovered a message secretly engraved there by a watchmaker who repaired it in 1861.

"Jonathan Dillon April 13- 1861 Fort Sumpter was attacked by the rebels on the above date. J Dillon," the brass underside of the watch movement reads.

The inscription continues: "April 13- 1861 Washington thank God we have a government Jonth Dillon."

The story of the engraving had been passed down through the years by descendants of Jonathan Dillon, the watchmaker, without ever being verified. Then recently one of his great-great-grandsons, Douglas Stiles, a lawyer from Waukegan, Ill., discovered an April 1906 article in The New York Times in which Mr. Dillon described making the engraving.

In the article Mr. Dillon, then 84, recounted that he was working at M. W. Galt & Company, a watch shop on Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington, in April 1861 when the shop's owner, Mr. Galt, hurried upstairs to tell him, "War has begun; the first shot has been fired."

"At that moment I had in my hand Abraham Lincoln's watch, which I had been repairing," Dillon told The Times, adding that he later learned it was the first watch that Lincoln ever owned.

An immigrant from Waterford, Ireland, he told The Times, "I was the only Union sympathizer working in the shop."

The National Museum of American History acquired the watch in 1958 through a bequest by a great-grandson of Lincoln. Approached by Mr. Stiles last year about the Times article, the



museum's curators brought in expert watchmakers to open the timepiece.

"It's a good opportunity to show how we do the research about the collection," Brent D. Glass, the museum's director, said on Tuesday. The opening of the watch was also timed to coincide with "Abraham Lincoln: An Extraordinary Life," an exhibition that opened at the museum in January.

Harry R. Rubenstein, the curator of the exhibition, said the museum had considered opening the watch in private and then decided to include the public. "It's a moment of discovery, and you can only discover things once," he said. "We wanted to share it."

Working under a strong light with magnifying glasses and minute tools, George Thomas, a master watchmaker from Towson, Md., had a bit of difficulty removing one of the pins but finally opened the back to reveal the underside of the watch movement.

"The moment of truth has come," he said. "Is there or is there not an inscription?"

He called Mr. Stiles, who attended the event with his brother, Don, 57, of Bloomington, Minn., to deliver the verdict. "There is an inscription!" Mr. Stiles said with elation.

"My goodness, that's Lincoln's watch," he said later in wonderment. "My ancestor put graffiti on it."

The inscription is not entirely accurate. Aside from misspelling Sumter, Mr. Dillon was evidently unaware that the opening shot of the Civil War had been fired on April 12, not April 13.

It also seems that Mr. Dillon's memory of the message was a little fuzzy as recounted in the 1906 article. He remembered his engraving as reading: "The first gun is fired. Slavery is dead. Thank God we have a President who at least will try."

The back of the watch movement also bears two other inscriptions: "LE Grofs Sept 1864 Wash DC," probably engraved by another repairer, and what appears to be "Jeff Davis." Whether the latter was intended as a retort by another watchmaker to Dillon's pro-Union sentiments is unknown. (Jefferson Davis was the president of the rebel Confederacy.)

The discovery of the Dillon message is likely to hearten enthusiasts of Lincoln lore. "It's a different message, but it still has that hopeful sound that the union will hold together, the country will go on," Mr. Rubenstein said. "That Lincoln carried this hopeful message in his pocket unbeknownst to him — it casts you back."

Mr. Glass, the museum's director, said it came as little surprise that the message did not mention slavery after all; Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation in separate executive orders in October 1862 and January 1863.

"In 1861 the preservation of the union was the key issue, and the abolition of slavery came later," he said.

Mr. Glass likened the watch's engraving to a note Thomas Jefferson attached to the underside of the writing table on which he wrote the Declaration of Independence. In the note, Jefferson wrote of the importance of preserving the desk because of what it was used for.

"I think there is a human instinct to want to communicate to the future," Mr. Glass said.

Mr. Thomas said the timepiece was in "mint condition" and had its original hands. He said that it was made in Liverpool in the 19th century, but that the gold case in which it resided for generations was made in the United States.

Although Mr. Rubenstein described the timepiece as Lincoln's "everyday pocket watch," acquired when he was practicing law in Springfield, Ill., Mr. Thomas said it looked almost untouched. "It seems the president did not wear it much," he said.

Mr. Stiles said he had first heard the story of the watch engraving sometime in the 1970s from a great-uncle. Last year, he said, a cousin in Ireland mentioned the story to him, which prompted him to start searching the Internet.

At the end of Tuesday's news conference, museum curators asked if the watch could be wound in the hope that those present could "hear the ticking, the sound that Abraham Lincoln heard," as Mr. Rubenstein said. It was the sole letdown of the day.

"It's frozen," Mr. Thomas said. "It hasn't been touched in a hundred years."

The watch was reassembled and will be returned to view at the museum, along with a detailed photograph and a transcript of the engraving.

"Does it change our view of history? No," Mr. Glass said. "But it adds to our understanding of how an ordinary person was affected by the events of the day."

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The New York Times

March 11, 2009



Smithsonian Institution/Associated Press

Abraham Lincoln's gold pocket watch, which contains a message secretly engraved by a watchmaker.

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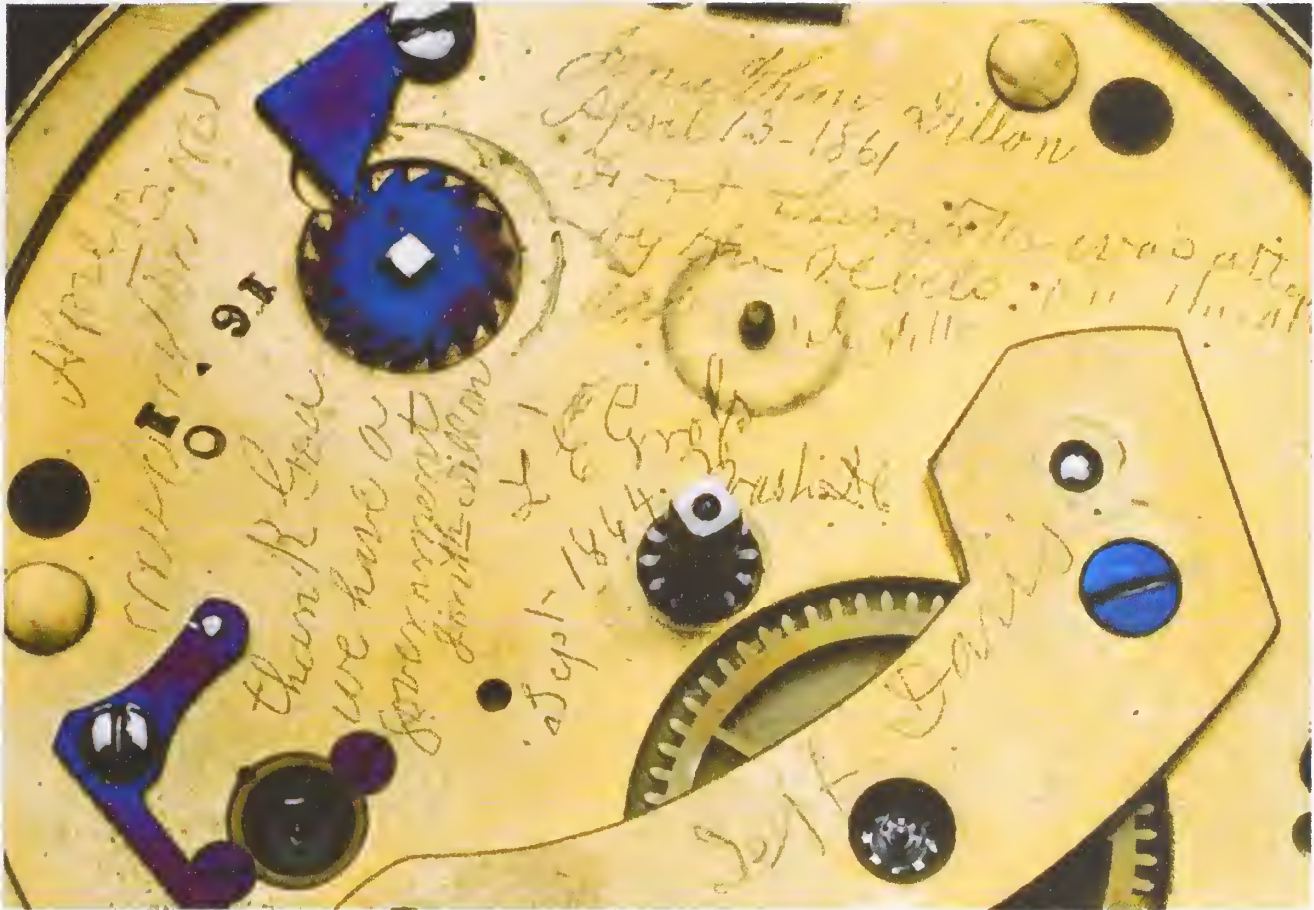


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The New York Times

March 10, 2009



Smithsonian National Museum of American History

"Jonathan Dillon April 13- 1861 Fort Sumpter was attacked by the rebels on the above date. J Dillon," the brass underside of the watch movement reads. It continues: "April 13- 1861 Washington thank God we have a government Jonth Dillon." The back of the watch movement also bears two other inscriptions: "LE Grofs Sept 1864 Wash DC," probably engraved by another repairer, and what appears to be "Jeff Davis." Whether the latter was intended as a retort by another watchmaker to Dillon's pro-Union sentiments is unknown.

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